

Mr. JEFFORDS. That is correct.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. KENNEDY. Reserving the right to object, as I understand it, if this is not objected to, then we are in a period of morning business without a time limitation.

Mr. REID. The Senator from Massachusetts, I say to the Presiding Officer, has no time constraint on his speaking now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the 24½ minutes that are now remaining in opposition to the Gregg amendment, time has been yielded for as much as he may consume to the Senator from Massachusetts after which the previous unanimous consent agreement will take effect.

The Senator may complete his statement.

Mr. KENNEDY. That is the order as stated by the Senator from Vermont. Am I correct?

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the Senate enter into a period of morning business until the hour of 3 p.m. with the time equally divided in the usual form.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, does the Senator from Vermont have any idea what we will do at 3 o'clock?

Mr. JEFFORDS. I have no idea.

Mr. REID. My point is, I say to my friend from Vermont, that until we have something more to do on the floor—we have had a number of requests on this side and probably on your side for people to speak in morning business—we will wait until 3 p.m. If there is no other business, we will go into morning business at 3 o'clock.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, would it be appropriate to inquire now if I could be placed on the list to speak as if in morning business for approximately 10 minutes?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. When does the Senator wish to speak?

Ms. LANDRIEU. Following Senator KENNEDY's time, which I understand would be about 20 more minutes, and then we go into morning business. I understand Senator ALLARD also wants to speak. I would be happy to follow Senator ALLARD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

EDUCATION

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I want to just take a few minutes to review the education record. I think I have tried to outline in as an objective way as possible what the record is with regard to health, particularly with re-

gard to children in the State of Texas, the Governor's record on the Patients' Bill of Rights, on the CHIP program, and also on the Medicaid program.

I think one can't review that record—not only my statements or the statements in the most recent Time Magazine which have drawn effectively the exact same conclusion—and not reach the conclusion that children have not been a priority on the political agenda of Texas over the period of the last six years.

On the issue of education, I spoke briefly yesterday in the Senate. I am troubled, as many of our colleagues, that we are not having cloture on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. In spite of all of the assurances that were given by the majority leader and Republican leadership, we still failed to do it.

I commend again our colleagues, Senator DEWINE, Senator JEFFORDS, Senator MIKULSKI, and others for effectively concluding the Older Americans Act shows even in these final hours that bipartisanship can work in a very important area. I welcome the chance to work with our colleagues on the committee and the chairman to make sure that we are going to take action. That is an enormously important piece of legislation for our seniors.

Education is enormously important for families as well. In spite of the fact that assurances were given by the majority, we still have not done so. For the first time in 35 years, we have not completed our work and reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

What has to be a central distress to all families is it appears now that the appropriations that are going to fund the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be the last train out of the station.

They are more than 3½ weeks late after the end of the fiscal year. It is troublesome to me to hear all of the statements about the importance of prioritizing education when we see that we have basically failed to do our work here in the Senate on this issue.

I want to take a moment to find out what we might look to in terms of the future, again looking to what has happened in Texas over the period of these last several years.

On the issue of the record on education in Texas, it is more of an "education mirage" than an "education miracle."

Under Governor Bush, in 1998, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, Texas ranked 45th in the nation in high school completion rates. Seventy-one percent of high school dropouts in Texas are minorities. Hispanic students in Texas dropped out at more than twice the rate of white students in the State.

In August, the College Board reported nationally that from 1997 to

2000, SAT scores have increased. But in Texas they have decreased. In 1997, Texas was 21 points below the SAT national average, and by 2000 the gap had widened to 26 points.

Let me review that very quickly. Since we have had a lot of talk and we have had a lot of sound bites on education, let's look at what has happened.

We will come back to what happened under the last several years in these same areas at the national level, which the Vice President was involved in and which he would like to see continued and expanded.

On Tuesday, Governor Bush heard more bad news. The Rand Corporation released a study that raises serious questions about the validity of the gains in student achievement claimed by the Governor. On CNN in August, the Governor said: Our state . . . has done the best . . . not measured by us but measured by the Rand Corporation . . . who take an objective look as to how states are doing when it comes to educating children.

Clearly, at that time, George W. Bush trusted the conclusions by Rand.

On CNN, in September, Governor Bush said: One of my proudest accomplishments is I worked with Republicans and Democrats to close the achievement gap in Texas.

The recent Rand study shows his claim is false. The achievement gap in Texas is not closing; it is widening.

On Fox News, in August, Governor Bush said: Without comprehensive regular testing, without knowing if children are really learning, accountability is a myth, and standards are just slogans.

But, the Rand study shows that the tests cited by Governor Bush to support his claim are biased. They found the gains in student achievement are the product of a discredited practice called "teaching to the test," and that claims of real success in student achievement far exceed the actual results in Texas.

The Rand study also says the gains in student achievement in Texas may be inflated, questioning the validity of the scores. According to the study, gains on the Texas State test are far greater than the results for the same students on standard national tests.

The Rand study questions the value of the Texas State test because it involves teaching to the test instead of real learning. The Bush education plan has the same serious flaw. It focuses on tests, tests, and more tests. We, as a country, have more tests than any other country in the world.

Inevitably, schools will focus more and more on test preparation, as happened in Texas with the State tests, and less on real teaching. In the end, it is education that suffers and so do the students.

In addition, in Texas more and more students with disabilities are excluded

from taking the test, and more and more students are dropping out or being held back. That is not a satisfactory prescription for improving education.

Instead, we should look at the success of States such as North Carolina, which is improving education the right way by investing in schools, teacher quality, and afterschool programs in order to produce better results for students.

Governor Bush's plan mandates more tests for children but it does nothing to ensure schools actually improve so that children will obtain a better education.

It is clear that Governor Bush is out of touch with parents and students when it comes to education. Governor Bush says everything in education is failing—it is all doom and gloom. His solutions go back to the old scheme to abandon public schools and refuse to make needed investments in education. He mandates more and more tests for children, but does nothing to help create the change needed to ensure that all the children pass the tests. He turns his back on what works and resorts to right wing policies instead, which are inadequate to meet the challenges of genuine school reform.

Early education initiatives are especially important. Study after study has shown that children who have quality learning experiences early in life have a greater ability to learn in school, to work successfully with their teachers and their peers, and to master needed skills. We can do more—much more—to put this impressive research into practice. But Governor Bush has no plan to expand access to preschool education. He has no plan to expand Head Start—only empty rhetoric about reforming the program.

Assistance for low-performing schools is also essential. We know that with needed investments, failing public schools will improve. In North Carolina, low-performing schools are given technical assistance by special state teams that provide targeted support to help turn around those schools. In the 1997–98 school year, 15 schools were selected and received intensive help from these state assistance teams. In August 1998, the state reported that most of these schools had achieved “exemplary” growth—and none continue to be identified as low-performing. In the 1998–99 school year, 11 schools were identified and received help from the assistance teams. Nine schools met or exceeded their growth targets at the end of the year. That's the kind of aid to education that works, and we should support it in all states. Instead, Governor Bush abandons low-performing schools—and proposes instead a private school voucher plan that drains needed resources from troubled schools and traps low-income children in them.

Another major problem hindering schools' ability to teach students effec-

tively is the fact that many schools have obsolete, crumbling and inadequate facilities. All teachers and students deserve safe, modern facilities with up-to-date technology. Sending children to dilapidated and overcrowded classrooms sends an unacceptable message. It tells them they don't matter. No CEO would tolerate a leaky ceiling in the boardroom—and no teacher should have to tolerate it in the classroom. We have an obligation to children and parents to modernize the nation's schools—to build more schools, so that there are more classrooms and less overcrowding, and more computers and other equipment. It is long past time to end the days when the worst building in town is the school house with its crumbling walls and broken pipes and leaky roofs that plague students and teachers and classrooms. But congressional Republicans have repeatedly refused to address these pressing needs. Governor Bush doesn't do nearly enough either. He makes only a token investment in school construction, and he ignores communities' needs to repair crumbling and unsafe schools.

Smaller classes are also an indispensable element of school reform. Research documents what parents and teachers have always known—that small classes improve student achievement. Teachers are able to maintain discipline more effectively. Students receive more individual attention and instruction. Students with learning disabilities are identified earlier, and their needs can be met without placing them in costly special education. Instead of applying this basic and widely accepted principle, Governor Bush eliminates the current and increasingly effective effort to help communities reduce class sizes. We must also make a stronger commitment to help communities attract, train and support the highest quality teachers and principals. Two million new teachers will be needed over the next 10 years, because of the large number of teachers nearing retirement and the continuing large increases in student enrollment. The shortage of teachers is compounded by the shameful fact that 50 percent of teachers leave the profession within 5 years.

Instead of using our budget resources to strengthen programs that work to improve teacher quality and put well-trained teachers in all classrooms, Governor Bush would simply hand over a block grant to states—a blank check—and hope that state governors will spend the federal aid in ways that improve teacher quality. Clearly, America can do better than that. We have to do better than that. We must also do more to make college accessible and affordable. Parents and students across the country are also struggling to pay for college. The opportunity for a college education

should not be determined by the level of family income. Any student who has the ability, who works hard, and who wants to attend college should have the opportunity to do so. We should do more—much more—to make college affordable for every qualified student.

We also need to do more to help train workers who have lost their jobs because of corporate down-sizing or business relocations, so they can find other good jobs in their communities. Workers need opportunities to upgrade their skills to remain competitive, especially in the modern economy. Better services and real training for dislocated workers will give them the skills they need to continue their careers. It will also help to meet employers' growing needs for well-qualified workers. But, Governor Bush has no plan to make college more affordable or help these dislocated workers. He expands Pell grants primarily for the first year of college only. He makes only a limited effort to help the nation's workers upgrade their skills.

The vast majority of Americans want us to address these challenges more effectively. We know that many schools across the country are doing an excellent job. The real challenge is to do what it takes to create better schools and better college opportunities for all students. Like Governor Bush, this Republican Congress deserves a failing grade for its lack of support for school reform. Too often, we have abandoned states and local school districts in their efforts to provide students with a good education. Too often, Congress has stood on the sidelines and declined to be an active participant in the nation's education policy. It is only through a strong and cooperative commitment at every level—federal, state, and local—that the nation can adequately meet its education needs. We have a responsibility to do all we can to meet the pressing challenge to guarantee that students will graduate from school and college well-prepared for careers in the new information-age and in our technologically-advanced economy and our competitive global society.

That's what AL GORE and Democrats in Congress are proposing—a constructive and more effective balance between accountability for better results and additional resources for programs that work to improve schools. We will ensure that every child receives a good early education, by ensuring that preschool is available to all children. We will help communities improve public schools. Our goal is to put a well-trained teacher in every classroom. We understand that when class size goes up, opportunity for learning goes down. We will help schools reduce class size, so the nation's students can be taught more effectively. We will make major investments in helping communities to build new schools, to alleviate overcrowding and to repair and modernize

obsolete and dilapidated classrooms and facilities. We will hold states and schools accountable for results, so that all children have the opportunity to meet high standards. We will expand opportunities for college and later learning by making college tuition tax deductible and by increasing Pell grants. We will reach out to millions of disadvantaged young children and help them to see and believe that college can be a realistic option for their future. We will help the nation's workers obtain the on-going skills training they need, and provide tax credits for employers who offer worker training.

In all of these ways, AL GORE's approach to education is the right direction for the nation's future. We have reached the final days of this Congress, and we have yet to give needed priority to education. Negotiations are underway, and there is still a chance to meet our commitment to families and communities across the country, and do what is needed to meet their education needs.

At the end of this Congress, families across the country will assess what we have done to meet these priorities, and the verdict has to be, "too little, too later." This Republican Congress deserves a failing grade on education, and no "election eve conversion" is enough to avoid that failing grade. The American people share our Democratic commitment to the nation's students, parents, schools and communities. We have already made students and families across the country wait too long for this needed education assistance.

We have seen the SAT math scores at their highest in 30 years. This is a very modest improvement nationwide, but all the indicators are going in the right direction as compared to Texas, and scores have increased both for males and females.

The number of students taking advanced math and science classes from 1990 to 2000: There is an increase in the number of students taking precalculus, calculus, and physics; students are taking more difficult and challenging courses. They are doing better on the national standardized tests. That is because they want to go to college because there is an increasing opportunity available to them under the proposals made by the administration. That is catching on with students all over the country because we are finding more and more students are taking the SAT. More and more students are taking the difficult, challenging, rigorous tests. Students are doing better in spite of the fact more are taking more difficult and challenging courses, and the national trends are moving in the right direction. That is completely contrary to what has happened in the State of Texas.

This is not to suggest we don't have many areas of our country and many school districts that don't need a great

deal of help and assistance. However, what we are seeing as a result of the administration, which Vice President Gore has been a part of, and he has been strongly supportive of, these education programs are moving in the right direction. They are moving in the right direction.

When he talks about smaller class sizes, better trained teachers, mentoring in terms of teaching, afterschool programs, new technology, and accountability, it is being based upon the schools and school districts which are effectively breaking the mold where we are getting children with enhanced achievement and accomplishment. That is what I think families want in this country, not just cliches.

I also wish to mention a final point of contrast between Governor Bush and the Vice President on the early education initiatives and how important they are. Study after study has shown that children who have quality learning experiences early in life have a greater ability to learn in school, to work successfully with their teachers, their peers, and master needed skills. We can do much more to put this impressive research into practice.

We have some bold initiatives which are bipartisan. I commend the leadership, Senator STEVENS, Senator JEFFORDS, and others who have been a part of this effort for some period of time. I think we have some real movement here. That debate has been independent of the broader issues on elementary and secondary education. I know in the Vice President's proposal, in terms of investing in the future, this early education program has an important commitment.

I remind our colleagues that this whole area was an area that had bipartisan support a number of years ago when the Governors met in Charlottesville. The first recommendation was made to the American people that the Governors were going to be committed. We were challenging the administration. The Congress was ready to learn. Children ought to be ready to learn when they go to school. "Ready to learn" means giving those children the kind of confidence building that is so essential in the very early years, when their brains are in formation.

Various Carnegie commission reports have demonstrated the early interventions help build confidence. They also demonstrate children begin to appreciate learning in these early formative years. Second, the children develop interpersonal skills which are enormously important when they begin their education experience. Finally, the tests show they develop a sense of humor, which I think is probably of value in carrying one through life.

This early intervention has been particularly and repeatedly emphasized and stressed by the Vice President. It ought to be taken into strong consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VOINOVICH). The Senator from Colorado.

Mr. ALLARD. Are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business.

Mr. ALLARD. I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to speak for 10 minutes under morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE DEFICIT

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I have been following the debate between the two Presidential candidates and notice that the Vice President wants to take full credit for paying down the deficit. At the time that the legislation went through the Congress, the President's proposal was a tax increase, and it was a proposal to increase spending in 1993.

I served on the Budget Committee in the House and I expressed at that time in reality this was not a tax to cut the deficit; it was a tax to increase spending. As members of the House Budget Committee, we had pointed out at that time that it was going to create a \$2 billion deficit as far as the mind's eye could see.

So now we have the Vice President on the campaign trail taking credit for having eliminated the deficit. In reality, what it was, it was the Republican Congress. In 1993, when this was passed, Democrats controlled the Senate, Democrats controlled the House, and Democrats were in control of the Presidency. This passed by a very narrow margin in the House. Not one Republican voted for it. It came over to the Senate and would not have passed the Senate if at that time the Vice President, AL GORE, had not voted for the budget proposal which, in effect, was going to maintain the deficit at \$200 billion.

So I wanted to bring some facts to the floor in that regard. I thought it was important I do that.

This year, in July, just before we were ready to adjourn, the assistant minority leader pointed out that I made a comment at one time and my comment was, about the President's plan in 1992, which we were voting on:

In summary, the plan has a fatal flaw—it does not reduce the deficit.

Today I am standing up on the Senate floor to stand by my remarks because, if we look historically, that plan did not reduce the deficit. In fact, I repeat, AL GORE's record is that of a tax hike because he is the one who voted for this—his vote alone. AL GORE would like to have you believe that actually what he was doing was putting in place a plan to eliminate the deficit.

I point out there is no document in the Clinton-Gore administration that exists that shows the largest tax hike—and that is what this was—the largest